

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 2, 8-14, and 18 without prejudice.

Please amend claims 1, 15, 16 and 17 as follows.

Please add new claims 21-34 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A vacuum cleaner comprising:

a housing defining a cyclonic airflow chamber for separating contaminants from a suction airstream, said housing further comprising an inlet for said cyclonic airflow chamber and an outlet for said cyclonic airflow chamber;

a nozzle base on which said housing is pivotally mounted, said nozzle base including a ~~main~~ suction opening, ~~said main suction opening being~~ fluidically connected with said cyclonic airflow chamber inlet;

an airstream suction source having an inlet disposed adjacent said cyclonic airflow chamber outlet and a suction source exhaust outlet ~~spaced from said cyclonic airflow chamber,~~ said suction source selectively establishing and maintaining an approximately linear suction airstream from said said outlet of said cyclonic airflow chamber to said inlet of said airstream suction source; and

a main filter assembly positioned between said cyclonic airflow chamber and said suction source for filtering contaminants from said suction airstream.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Original) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 1 wherein said filter element is approximately cylindrical in shape.

4. (Original) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 3 wherein said filter element has a convoluted outer surface.

5. (Original) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 1 wherein said cyclonic airflow chamber inlet is disposed tangentially adjacent an outer periphery of said cyclonic airflow chamber and said cyclonic airflow chamber outlet is parallel to a longitudinal axis of said cyclonic airflow chamber.

6. (Original) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 1 further comprising a final filter assembly positioned on one of said housing and said nozzle base, said final filter assembly being in fluid communication with said suction source exhaust outlet for filtering said suction airstream exhausted from said suction source into the atmosphere.

7. (Original) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 6 wherein said final filter assembly comprises a high efficiency particulate arrest (HEPA) filter media.

8-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A vacuum cleaner comprising:
a nozzle section;
a housing section pivotally connected to said nozzle section and in fluid communication with said nozzle section;
a dirt cup selectively mounted ~~in~~ to said housing section;
a cyclonic airflow chamber at least partially located in said dirt cup for separating dirt and dust from a suction airstream flowing into said housing section between an inlet located ~~adjacent a first end~~ on a side wall of said housing section and an outlet located ~~adjacent a second end~~ parallel to an axis of said housing section;

a filter assembly located in said dirt cup, said filter assembly comprising:
a ~~filter rack~~ a support, and
a first filter element mounted on said ~~filter rack~~ support.

16. (Currently Amended) The upright vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 15 further comprising a suction source ~~having an inlet~~ located directly beneath ~~said outlet~~ of said dirt cup.

17. (Currently Amended) The upright vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 15 wherein said cyclonic airflow chamber inlet is located on a periphery of said dirt cup and said cyclonic airflow chamber outlet is located ~~along~~ parallel to a longitudinal axis of said dirt cup.

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The upright vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 15 further comprising a lid for selectively covering said dirt cup.

20. (Original) The upright vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 15 further comprising a second filter chamber disposed between said outlet of said housing section and said inlet of said suction source and a second filter element housed in said second filter chamber, for filtering contaminants from said airstream exhausted from said housing section

21. (New) A vacuum cleaner comprising:
a nozzle section including a nozzle inlet opening;
a housing section pivotally mounted to said nozzle section and in fluid communication with said nozzle section;
a dirt cup selectively mounted to at least one of said housing section and said nozzle section;

a cyclonic airflow chamber at least partially located in said dirt cup for separating dirt and dust from a suction airstream flowing into said dirt cup between an inlet of said dirt cup and an outlet of said dirt cup; and

a first filter element located in said cyclonic airflow chamber.

22. (New) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 21 further comprising a suction source having an inlet located adjacent to said outlet of said dirt cup.

23. (New) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 21 wherein said inlet of said dirt cup is located on a periphery of said dirt cup.

24. (New) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 21 wherein said outlet of said dirt cup is located along a longitudinal axis of said dirt cup.

25. (New) A vacuum cleaner comprising:

a nozzle section;

a housing section pivotally connected to said nozzle section and in fluid communication with said nozzle section;

a dirt cup selectively mounted to at least one of said housing section and said nozzle section;

a cyclonic airflow chamber at least partially located in said dirt cup for separating dirt and dust from a suction airstream flowing into said dirt cup between an inlet of said dirt cup and an outlet of said dirt cup;

a suction source mounted to one of said nozzle section and said housing section;

a first filter element located in said dirt cup; and

a second filter element disposed downstream from said first filter element.

26. (New) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 25, wherein said inlet of said dirt cup is located on a periphery of said dirt cup.

27. (New) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 25, wherein said outlet of said dirt cup is located along a longitudinal axis of said dirt cup.

28. (New) A vacuum cleaner comprising:
a nozzle section;
a housing section pivotally mounted to said nozzle section and in fluid communication with said nozzle section;
a suction source mounted to one of said nozzle section and said housing section;
a dirt cup selectively mounted to at least one of said housing section and said nozzle section, said dirt cup comprising a wall;
a cyclonic airflow chamber at least partially defined by said wall of said dirt cup for separating dirt and dust from a suction airstream flowing through said cyclonic airflow chamber; and
a filter element mounted in said cyclonic airflow chamber wherein said cyclonic airflow chamber comprises an outlet and wherein said filter element is located adjacent said cyclonic airflow chamber outlet.

29. (New) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 28, wherein said filter element extends along an axis that is parallel to an axis of said cyclonic airflow chamber.

30. (New) The vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 28, wherein said filter

element extends along an axis that is parallel to an axis of said dirt cup.

31. (New) The vacuum cleaner of claim 28 further comprising a cover removably secured to an open end of said dirt container.

32. (New) The upright vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 28 wherein an inlet of cyclonic airflow chamber is tangentially oriented in relation to an axial centerline of said cyclonic airflow chamber to promote a cyclonic airflow.

33. (New) The upright vacuum cleaner as set forth in claim 28 further comprising a suction airstream duct leading from said nozzle section to said cyclonic airflow chamber.

34. (New) The vacuum cleaner of claim 28 further comprising a second filter element disposed downstream from said cyclonic airflow chamber.